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FURMAN

M A G A Z I N E

SPRING 1987



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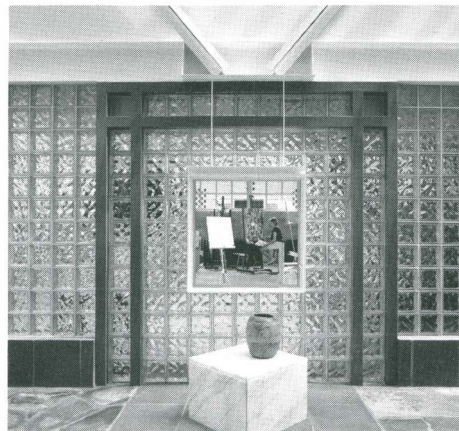
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Cover: Architects of the Roe Art Building
used common materials in uncommon ways
to create a work of art. The building is
featured in this special issue, beginning on
page 10. Photo by Peter Vanderwarker.



'FOREIGN' STUDY IN THE ROCKIES

BY JOHN BATSON

*Traveling to distant
mountains and deserts,
Furman students learn how
plants and animals survive
in extreme conditions.*

Now and freezing temperatures are not what most Furman students expect to encounter when they enroll for summer school. Yet for a dozen students in June 1985, this was only the tip of the iceberg. Or perhaps we should say, icing on the cake. Or maybe, just another special learning experience.

Although many students have taken "Community Ecology," or Biology 51, this group was the first in Furman's history to take the course in the Rocky Mountains, from Arizona to Canada. For 26 days, they lived together, ate together, hiked together, and rode together in a single university van, travelling some 7,500 miles while visiting 20 states plus Canada. For many of the lucky 12, it was the first time they had traveled out of the Southeast.

Biology 51, according to the Furman catalog, is a "travel study course to habitats and ecological communities outside South Carolina." It is open to all students, regardless of their majors, and offered once a year. The places visited differ, depending upon which biologist teaches the course and other factors. It is not a part of Furman's Foreign Study Program, but most of the experiences provided by Biology 51 are indeed "foreign" to the students. In previous years, students in Biology 51 have visited the Galapagos Islands, the American desert Southwest, the Florida Keys, and the New England states and eastern Canada. Next summer another group will travel to the Rocky



Mountains and the Pacific Northwest. No matter the destination, the course always emphasizes plant and animal relationships to the habitats visited.

Bill Teska, associate professor of biology, organized and taught the 1985 trip. A wildlife biologist and a native of Idaho, Bill was already familiar with all the areas to be visited, which included most of the American Rocky Mountains. It was my good fortune to accompany him and the students on this trip functioning mostly as a "third hand," helping out wherever I could. But, to be honest, I was merely another student, eager like the rest to soak up all I could of the ecology of the regions visited.

"Community Ecology" is the title of the course, but the subtitle in 1985 was

"Changes in Latitude, Changes in Altitude." The major goal was to compare the adaptations of plants and animals at different altitudes and at different latitudes. What better place to conduct this study than the tallest and longest range of mountains on the continent?

We left the Furman campus on June 6, only one minute after the scheduled departure time of 6:00 a.m., after loading 14 peoples' worth of clothes, camping gear, food and scientific equipment into the trailer especially made for the biology department. Heading west, we soon locked onto I-40 West and covered 740 miles the first day. Our destination was a state park in Arkansas where we set up the tents that were to be our homes for the next three and a half weeks. After cooking our first evening meal on the road, we settled down in sleeping bags and slept soundly in anticipation of our second major travel day.

On our second day we encountered plants and animals that are unfamiliar to the Southeasterner. We saw cottonwood trees, scissor-tailed flycatchers (birds with incredibly long tails), and oil wells pumping their precious liquid from below the vast, treeless plains of Oklahoma and the Texas Panhandle. For most of the students, this was indeed a foreign place. At the end of

Hiking up from the floor of the Grand Canyon in 100-degree temperatures, students witness firsthand the dramatic effects of altitude change on plants and animals.





the day, tents were pitched amidst blooming cholla cactus, pinyon pines, and black-tailed jackrabbits that wandered through our temporary home in a New Mexico state park.

By this time, the course had officially begun. On the road, Bill and I had already begun what were to become standard "mini-lectures" over the public address system. While traveling at 55 mph, the students kept their notebooks handy, waiting for another description of the habitat we were driving through, or a discussion of why the trees were so much shorter than in South Carolina, or why pronghorn antelope but not deer are threatened by ranchers' fences.

But most of our course work was done outside, such as our studies in the Grand Canyon. Our reservations with the National Park Service had been made months in advance, and included one night's campsite each on the south rim, the north rim, and at the base of the mile-deep gorge. Although the canyon is roughly 200 miles long from east to west, it is only five to ten miles across from south to north. Now, ten miles doesn't seem very far for a group like ours to walk, but that's ten miles as the crow (or, more typically in the case of the canyon, as the raven) flies. To get to the Colorado River at the bottom of the canyon required a trip of about eight miles of dusty, switch-backing, shadeless trail, with no water available anywhere along the way. With air temperatures as high as 109° F, the trip was arduous to say the least.

After a long day, one group sets up the campsite, while another prepares the evening meal.

With several pounds of water, food and other gear in our backpacks, the trip was downright exhausting. Most of the way down, we kept reminding ourselves of Dr. Teska ("Dr. T," as he was usually called) who was driving the van and trailer the long way around the canyon. We thought about the Navajo land and the desert plants he was seeing. But mostly, we fantasized about the cool air from the van's air conditioner, and the gallons of freezing milk shakes we imagined he was enjoying as we drank voluminous quantities of hot water just to survive the squelching heat and the dry air.

The main purpose for the hike was to get a firsthand look at the effects of elevation change on plant and animal adaptations. As we descended through the many sedimentary layers of the canyon, we paused routinely to examine the layers of life forms. We passed from tree-filled habitat through scorch-

ing desert to nearly bare plains. Often in the canyon, the hiker can see a thunderstorm just a few miles away and the total evaporation of the rain before it ever reaches the parched ground. Despite the low rainfall in the desert regions (less than ten inches annually), a variety of plants can be found, though they are able to survive only with special adaptations. These include tough coverings on stems and leaves to prevent water loss and light coloration to help reflect the sun's heat.

Arriving at Bright Angel Campground beside the Colorado River in the base of the canyon, we gladly rested in the shade of huge cottonwoods, and quickly shed our dusty footwear for a quick dip in the cool waters of Bright Angel Creek. Some of the students unfortunately forgot one important phenomenon of physics — retention of the sun's heat by exposed sand — and nearly burned their feet. The temperature of the sand in the sun was 138° F. That evening and night, we watched raccoons, turkeys and collard lizards near the campsite. One pesky mule deer woke us in the middle of the night while sampling the next day's food in backpacks.

After a hearty breakfast at 5:00 a.m. the next day, we began what was to be a 14-mile, 12-hour hike out to the north rim of the canyon. For the first half of this trip, the climb was gradual and pleasant. The trail followed Bright Angel Creek, its narrow canyon walls keeping us shaded and cool as we watched the sunrise begin to heat up the massive rock faces we would ascend later in the day. Canyon wrens and lazuli buntings sang for us as we walked past canyon grape vines, box elder and fernbush trees, and wild jimson weed.

About midday, we paused by the creek for a long lunch break. We knew this would be the last time we would see its refreshing waters, and even though its temperature here was a very cold 52° F, several of us insisted on taking one final "bath." Dr. T., who had spent the night on the north rim, hiked down the trail and met us here, providing some much needed enthusiasm to a tired bunch who had the toughest part of the hike to come. So far, we had walked about ten miles and had ascended roughly 2,800 feet. We faced another 3,000 vertical feet, but the remaining trail was only four and a half miles long.

As we approached the north rim of the canyon, we found much cooler temperatures and a beautiful coniferous forest of firs and pines. The changes

*From the Grand Canyon,
the group traveled north
through Utah, Nevada, Idaho
and Montana to Canada.*



Students count the number of cheat grass plants in a square meter to determine the effects of cattle grazing on vegetation in the Great Basin Desert.

in vegetation were striking, and we were glad to be leaving the desert habitat below us. When we made it to the top, we were ready to suspend our studies momentarily in favor of something more self-indulgent: hot showers. Then, after a hearty meal, we pitched the tents and willingly drifted off to sleep.

After the Grand Canyon, we knew we could face anything. We had grown to know each other very well, and to anticipate the needs of the group. The patterns of study established over the previous days were now familiar to all, so we set our sights on further studies in the North.

We traveled into Utah, toward Bryce Canyon, where we saw hauntingly beautiful rock structures and studied plant and animal life at 9,200 feet. The thin air and the gorgeous scenery were unique, but we were all humbled as we stood beside bristlecone pine trees,

some of which are estimated to be 2,000 years old. It was awe-inspiring to imagine these gnarled yet majestic trees just beginning their long lives at the time of Christ.

In addition to their academic work, the students were also responsible for all camping equipment and for menus and food preparation. One group was in charge of setting up the campsite and another group was in charge of preparing the food each day. We stopped every three to four days for groceries and camping supplies, and every five to seven days to wash clothes. On most days the evening meal was the only hot meal, and we sampled a number of creative dishes. Beth Ellington, a sophomore from Montreat, N.C., will be remembered for her special tuna helper. We initially sampled with some suspicion, but eventually complimented her for a good variation from the recipe recommended on the box. Another

memorable dinner was cooked by Corput King, a junior from Stone Mountain, Ga. He not only barbecued glazed chicken; he also included chocolate cream pie for dessert.

Every day was filled with activity, beginning with a wake-up call at 6:00 a.m. and ending around 11:00 p.m. Setting up the camping equipment, cooking the meals, planning menus, washing dishes, studying and writing in journals required lots of time. On two occasions we went to restaurants to break the routine. The more typical treat, however, was a quick stop at an ice-cream store. We knew it was time for another such treat whenever the students dreamed that Baskin-Robbins had opened a store next to their tent.

As we traveled north through Idaho toward Montana, the pale colors of the desert gradually gave way to the rich greens of northern coniferous forests. Near the Canadian border, we camped in Glacier National Park and studied the climate, and the plants and animals that live in this habitat. Students learned to use a tree borer, taking samples from evergreens to estimate the age of the forests. They also learned to identify a variety of trees, wildflowers, birds, reptiles and mammals. One of our favorites was the mountain goat, which we encountered in the snow-covered mountains at the tree line in Glacier National Park. The goats were surprisingly tame, having grown accustomed to humans visiting their protected native habitat. Although June 21 was a beautiful sunny day, the cold nighttime temperature and the snow fields we hiked on — not yet melted from the long winter — made it difficult to realize it was the first day of summer.

In Glacier we studied adaptations of life forms at high altitudes. Like many mammals, the mountain goats grow thick fur coats in the winter and shed them in the spring. Some of their discarded hair hung like Christmas tree ornaments from the short, stocky sub-alpine fir trees. While we collected the goat hair, we discussed how these small trees manage to live in this harsh environment. Some were 100 years old or older, but only a few feet tall with trunks only two to three inches in diameter. They grew in clumps, surviving perhaps because of the mutual shelter they provide against the fierce winds. Sometimes completely covered by snow in the winter months they

have survived and reproduced in this delicate habitat for many decades.

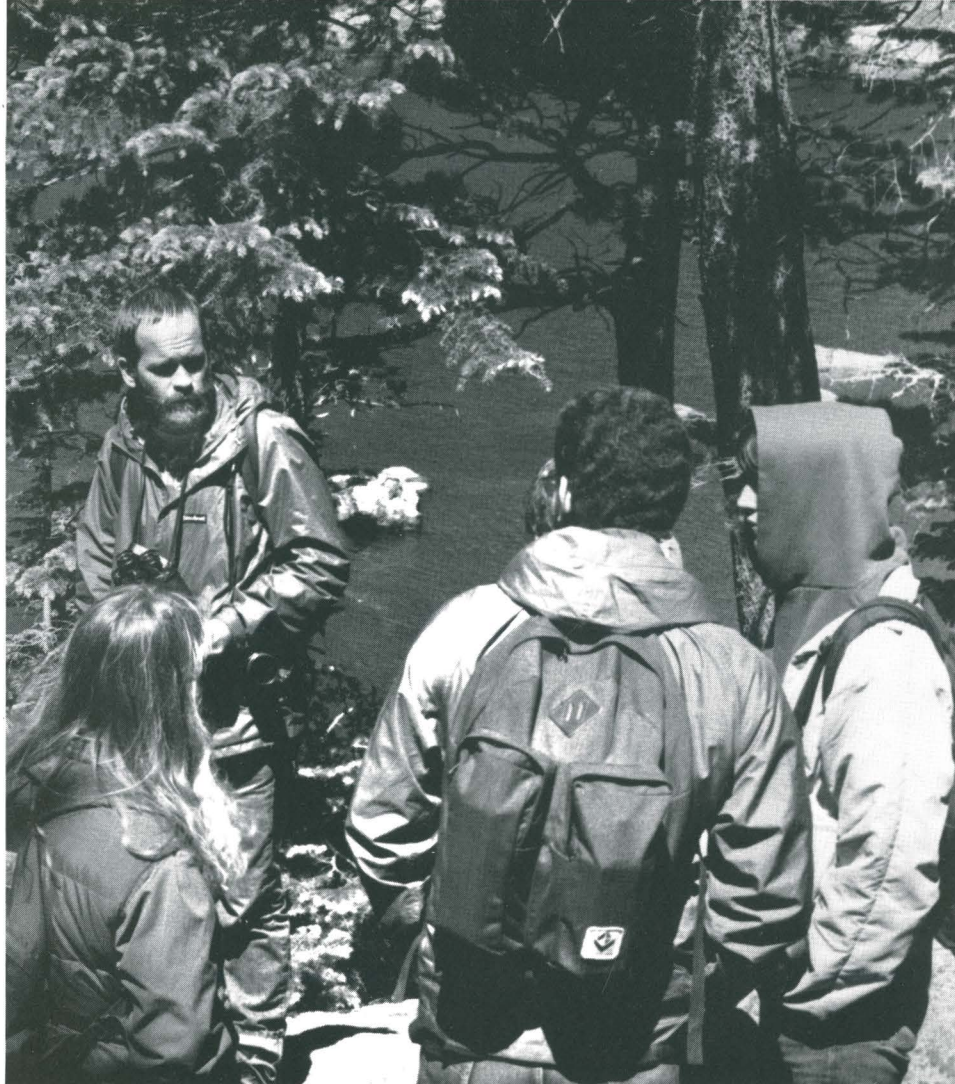
We had hoped to see bald eagles, moose and other large animals in Glacier. We missed them. However, on one of our day hikes, we came across a large tree that had just been violently stripped of its bark. We were thrilled to think a bear was nearby, but also concerned that it might be too near. Another hike had to be abandoned because the park service had recently seen bears on the trail.

The lakes of Glacier National Park are truly spectacular. Ancient and massive glaciers cut these lakes, some of which are more than 400 feet deep. Over thousands of years, the large ice masses carved into the bedrock long and relatively narrow gorges that later filled with melted snow and glacial ice. Today, the lakes' waters are a rich turquoise color because of the glacial powder of "flour" in the waters supplying them.

Our visit in Canada was brief, but memorable. Here we also examined the plants and wildlife, as we had everywhere we stopped. A coyote ran in front of the van as we drove to a lunch stop. And we were thrilled to watch an osprey carry a huge snake back to its nest to feed its young. While spending a couple of hours as tourists in the town of Waterton, we exchanged some of our money for Canadian dollars and realized that we really were in a different country. Curt Barnes, a junior from Jacksonville, Fla., accidentally left his camera on a city park bench and discovered its absence as we were heading back to our campsite in Montana. Although we feared it would be gone, we drove back and found it exactly where he had left it.

Throughout most of our journey, we emphasized the history of the land. We traveled over the old Pony Express route, the Oregon Trail, and through a variety of Indian lands. In every case, we tried to imagine what it was like a century ago when settlers first travelled to the Northwest. We paused at one famous spot — White Bird Hill — the site of a massive battle between U.S. Cavalry forces and the Nez Perce Indians in 1877. This was the tribe led by Chief Joseph, a remarkable Indian leader who fought so valiantly to preserve his culture, perhaps most well-remembered for a quote issued after his final defeat: "I will fight no more forever."

Yellowstone and the Grand Tetons National parks — near the juncture of Idaho, Montana and Wyoming — were places we had all looked forward to seeing. We saw Old Faithful and the



JOHN BATSON

In Rocky Mountain National Park, Dr. John Batson and several students explore a spruce fir forest in some of the coldest weather they experienced during the trip (top). A small cliff chipmunk, held by Dr. Bill Teska, receives lots of friendly atten-

tion from (left to right) Beth Ellington, Nelson Roberts, Curt Barnes, Fran Taylor, Jennie Smith, Angie Reece, Brent Kelly, Richard Abt, Corput King, Allen McCloud and Ellen Töpple.



Beth Ellington and Jennie Smith identify and record plant specimens.

boiling mud pots, as well as elk and moose. We even took a short white water raft trip down a portion of the Snake River. Near the Tetons, we continued to collect a variety of specimens, as we had done all along our trip. The students collected samples of roughly 30 tree and wildflower species for their own private study. Bill and I collected plant, butterfly, small mammal and reptile specimens for Furman's museum collections. In one isolated, primitive campsite in Utah, the women discovered a rattlesnake in the campsite, and Dr. T and Allen McCloud — a junior from Powder Springs, Ga. — collected it as well, very carefully!

Just south of the Grand Tetons, we drove several hours through falling snow, trying all the time to remember that, yes, this was summer, and, yes, only two weeks before we had hiked in 109° F. temperatures. It was exhilarating to think about the sights we had seen and the territory we had covered.

At nearly every campsite we set small mammal "live-traps" in the evening and checked them in the morning. It was fascinating to see — and hold — the small nocturnal rodents whose habitats we were invading. With one exception, we always returned the captured ani-

mals to their environments unharmed. The exception was the kangaroo rat. Dr. T had previously secured the appropriate collecting permits from Idaho officials, so we trapped several of these animals with the hope of establishing a small colony for research after our return to Furman. Another way we captured these elusive rodents became one of the highlights of the trip for some of the students. The night before the first exam, Ellen Topple, Dan Bouknight and three other students rode with Dr. T and me as we drove the van and used a spotlight to find kangaroo rats in the dirt roads. When we spotted one, the students would quickly jump out of the van to chase the animal, eventually catching it in the sand with their bare hands. These desert rodents, highly adapted to dry, hot environments, rode back to South Carolina in cages in the van. We grew very fond of these attractive rats, or "the little cuties" as they were often called.

Our final major study site was Rocky Mountain National Park. This park boasts the highest paved road in the world, Trail Ridge Highway, which reaches an altitude of 12,138 feet. Because the tree line is about 11,500

feet at this latitude, alpine tundra is easily accessible. At such elevations, there is precious little topsoil, and what little exists is exceedingly sensitive to disturbance. We were careful to remain on the short trails so as not to disturb the beautiful mosses, wildflowers and lichens that grew so close to the ground. These plants have an incredibly brief growing season, and have remarkable adaptations to ensure their reproductive success. We humans from the Southeast were less successful in adapting to such altitudes. The thin air at 12,000 feet made it difficult to capture enough oxygen, and resulted in low endurance and dizziness even while walking slowly. Our experiences here once again reminded us of the terrific stress that animals and plants face living in such extreme habitats.

As in many college courses, students in Biology 51 were required to read extensively, write a research paper, give an oral report, and take a final examination. Most of the reading and the research reports were completed before we left Furman. We met as a group several times during the spring term for lectures as well as for instruction in how to pitch tents, tie knots and operate the cooking stoves. Each student researched a topic that was important for the course, wrote a paper, and turned it in before the trip. An oral report of that topic was delivered to the group — usually around the campfire during the trip. The final examination was administered near Rocky Mountain National Park on one of the coldest mornings of our trip. It was 26° F when we woke up that morning, but it warmed up nicely by test time. Students answered essay questions and identified plant specimens we had studied along the way.

Biology 51 was not an easy course, but all of the students made good grades. When you live with your subject matter, you learn exceedingly well.

Whatever careers they choose, these 12 students will always remember the plants and animals they studied in the Rocky Mountains. They will always remember the magnificent scenery and the friends with whom they traveled. For them, the places they visited that summer will always be special — and much less foreign. □

Dr. John Batson, class of 1974, teaches psychology at Furman.

THE TIMES OF HER LIFE

BY VINCE MOORE

Swimmer Angel Myers' record-setting performance at the Goodwill Games makes her a serious candidate for the 1988 Olympics.

Angel Myers, having just finished her freshman year at Furman, arrived in the Soviet Union on the last day of June 1986 without fanfare. Although her departure was mentioned briefly in Greenville's local newspaper, the media's interest in her participation as an athlete in the Goodwill Games was little more than cursory. Even those who had closely followed Myers' career weren't truly aware of the significance of the moment.

But five days later, on the Fourth of July, people all over the world became aware that Angel Myers was in Moscow. That was the day she won two gold medals in the swimming competition, a feat that dramatically lifted her out of the great mass of good swimmers and into the select company of 1988 Olympic hopefuls. It was an improbable leap, but Myers' swimming career had spent nine months testing the boundaries of probability.

"When I went to the Goodwill Games, I wasn't really thinking in terms of medals," Myers says, "but I did think I would swim well. I had a little jet lag at first, but by the time we got started I felt pretty good."

Myers won her first gold medal in the 50-meter freestyle, setting an American record of 25.60. Her time was one-half second faster than she had ever swam before, defying the logic of a sport where legitimate improvement is measured in hundredths of a second. Myers' performance was also brilliant testimony to the fact that she is one of



AP/WIDEWORLD PHOTOS

Angel Myers is all smiles after winning her first gold medal at the Goodwill Games in Moscow.

those rare athletes whose gifts are enhanced, rather than diminished, by the importance of the moment.

She then won the 100-meter freestyle, and won two more gold medals as a member of the 400 medley relay and 400 freestyle relay teams. She also won a bronze medal in the 100-meter butterfly. After her performances, Howard Wheeler, Myers' coach at Furman, wasted no time putting her accomplishments into perspective.

"Right now," he said, "I think she's as good as anybody in the country."

There would be no doubt about that statement a few months later. None of

America's top female swimmers at the World Championships in Madrid came within a half-second of Myers' American record in the 50 freestyle, a time that only two other swimmers in the world have been able to better. As of January 1987, her time in the 100 freestyle (56.48) placed her third in the United States and eighth in the world. She was also ranked eighth in the nation in the 100 butterfly.

For Myers, the Goodwill Games were the culmination of a year of tremendous improvement. She came to Furman in the fall of 1985 from Americus, Ga., after earning honors as a high school All-American. Wheeler says that while Myers had as much potential as any swimmer he had ever recruited, there is still no way for a coach to measure the probability of success.

When she arrived at Furman, Myers, at 5-foot-6, weighed 133 pounds. Once she began lifting weights to increase her strength, she gained 17 pounds and managed to decrease her bodyfat by 30 percent. Nine months after she enrolled at Furman, she had improved her time in the 50-meter freestyle by one-and-a-half seconds, quickly traversing that incalculable distance that separates the great athletes from the very good ones.

"Angel was very unusual in that she hadn't physically matured by the time she got out of high school," Wheeler says. "Most female swimmers reach their physical potential at about 16. That's the age that great swimmers like Tracy Caulkins reached their peak. But



Angel didn't even begin to peak physically until her freshman year in college, and I think she'll get even stronger."

Actually, Myers had left plenty of clues during the school year that she was capable of such a performance at the Goodwill Games. She set several school records during the season and then won four individual championships at the NCAA Division II championships in March of 1986, becoming the first swimmer in NCAA history to accomplish such a feat. And then one month later, after being named NCAA Division II Swimmer of the Year, she won two events at the Junior Nationals in Orlando, Fla.

"She spent September through December of last year working very hard, both in the water and in the weight room," says Wheeler. "So, by January, all the work she had done began to take effect. She was improving daily."

Even so, she left for Moscow and the Goodwill Games without having attained celebrity status. It wasn't until she returned two weeks later that she discovered what international publicity can do for one's visibility.

For starters, she was greeted at the Greenville-Spartanburg Airport by approximately 100 people, including a large group of newspaper reporters and television cameramen. She was asked

to do nearly a dozen media interviews over the next few days before returning to her hometown of Americus, Ga., where city officials held a parade in her honor and gave her a key to the city.

"I was a little embarrassed by all the attention," Myers says. "I'm a private person and it's hard for me to talk about myself."

Ordinarily, it would be hard to suggest what Myers might do for an encore. But the 1988 Summer Olympics are just on the horizon, and the Olympics are the absolute mecca for any amateur athlete. While Myers must continue to improve if she is to have a chance of making the Olympic team, Wheeler believes she is more than capable of doing it.

"She's a natural sprinter who has total confidence when she gets in the pool," Wheeler says. "Her strongest event, the 50-meter freestyle, is not an Olympic event, although there is some talk it might be by 1988. But she is good in the 100 and 200, and she'll get even better. She'll stay motivated, too, because she is not overconfident."

Wheeler is right. Myers is getting better. During the first few months of her sophomore season, she qualified for four events at the NCAA Division I tournament (held March 19-21 in Indianapolis) and set two more school records, bringing her total to six. It was

Myers holds the American record in the 50-meter freestyle and has the third best time in the 100-meter freestyle.

quite a fall season considering that Wheeler didn't allow her to get anywhere near peak form.

Much will take place in the swimming world during the next two years. After the NCAA championship meet this spring, there are the Pan-Am Games in the summer. Myers will then work toward the Olympic trials the following summer with the idea of making the Olympic team in 1988.

It doesn't seem possible that Myers has accomplished so much in the short time she has been at Furman. No other athlete has made such an immediate impact in any sport. Myers' importance to Furman's athletic program became even more apparent this summer when Wheeler awarded her the first full swimming scholarship in school history.

"There's no doubt she's the best swimmer to set foot on the Furman campus," Wheeler says. "If you've got a national record holder, you had better figure out a way to give her a full ride." □

Vince Moore is director of the news service at Furman.

THE ROE ART BUILDING:

INSPIRATION OR INTRUSION?

BY MARGUERITE HAYS

*Never before has
a Furman building
evoked such lavish praise
or so much
passionate discussion.*

Soon after the new Roe Art Building opened last spring, we suggested to Charles Rogers, the principal architect, that Furman hold a symposium for local architects to see and discuss his building. "You don't want to do that," Rogers said in alarm. "We might have a fist fight."

We were startled. "What do you mean?"

"No two architects ever agree about anything," he explained.

Rogers was exaggerating, but not a lot. Architects, as well as Furman faculty members and students, alumni and visitors, disagree violently about the building. Most love it, but some hate it.

After more than 20 years of planning and design revision, construction of the building began uneventfully in the fall of 1985. As the steel girders rose, framing in a generous space of 28,000 square feet, the building seemed destined to look very much like other buildings on campus. But as workmen laid row after long row of red brick, relieved across the front only by the entrance and eight small, square windows, some people became concerned.

"It looks like a fortress," someone said. "It's unartistic," said another. After making several trips from his office to the front of the administration building to view the construction, one professor finally exploded, "That's the ugliest building I've ever seen."

Oblivious to his critics, Rogers commuted from Boston every two

weeks to oversee construction. The workmen finished most of the building in February and the art department moved in at the beginning of spring term. As people began to walk through the building and see it from different angles, most of them changed their minds about the building.

But a few were unimpressed. In a review, the outgoing editor of the *Paladin* described the front of the building as "lackluster" and asked, "Where are the marble steps or columns? How about a small, bubbling fountain by the entrance with a statue in it?"

In a letter of rebuttal to the editor, two art students accused the *Paladin* staff of "artistic naivete" and condemned their narrow conception of beauty. "The art building, in its 1980s Post Modern style, is an example of today's avant garde, fully equipped with architectural allusion to the Renaissance, Classicism and Art Deco," they wrote. "It is an expression of the present complete with all the richness of the past. What better place for this kind of architecture can be found than a liberal arts university?"

In less philosophical terms, the new editor of the *Paladin* wrote in May:

"I'm really glad to have the Roe Art Building on campus, because I really like cool, airy spaces, with lots of light and space. I like walking through it,

which I do often. I like the multi-media decoration. I like how it looks 'arty.'"

Whatever the opinion of others, the art faculty is ecstatic about the building. "It's a marvelous building," says Tom Flowers, chairman of the department. "The space is marvelous. The light is marvelous — any time of day in any kind of weather. Even on a gray day, we don't need artificial light."

When Olof Sorensen, who teaches printmaking and art history, describes the building, he becomes rhapsodic. (See his essay on page 22.) "It just proves my thesis that there can be heaven on earth," he says laughing. Glen Howerton, who teaches pottery, sculpture and watercolor, adds, "It's a pleasure to come to work."

The fact that the building pleases the art faculty pleases Charles Rogers. A quiet man in his forties with longish hair that falls over his eyes, Rogers is president of Perry Dean Rogers & Partners, the architectural firm in Boston that has designed all of the buildings on the Furman campus. A registered architect in 31 states, he is a graduate and former faculty member of Cornell University. He designs academic, corporate and residential buildings, and his work has been featured in a variety of publications, including *Progressive Architecture*, *Architectural*

Describing the Roe Art Building in Architectural Record, Margaret Gaskie writes that the building "bursts to life" at the front entrance.



THOMAS
ANDERSON
ROE
ART
BUILDING

Photographs by Peter Vanderwarker except as noted



With its Colonial brick exterior, slate roof, portico and pediment, the Roe Art Building blends in with other buildings on campus. The front of the building lines up with the front of McAlister Auditorium to create a visually pleasing sequence (top).

Record, Spazio e Societa, L'Industria del Cemento and L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui. Besides the Furman art building, he has designed academic buildings at Vassar, Wellesley College and Wesleyan University in Connecticut.

Rogers is at least the third or fourth member of his firm to design a version of the Furman art building over the past 20 years. As construction was delayed for lack of funds and costs escalated, earlier versions were put aside one by one as they became too expensive to build. In 1979, when Thomas A. Roe, Jr., pledged \$1 million toward the construction of an art building, Furman asked the architectural firm to come up with a new design.

As Rogers began to think about a new design, he considered first the particular location of the building. "I wanted to create a building that is visually appropriate for the campus," he says. "Like most of my buildings, the art building is very 'site dependent.' In this location we had some very specific relationships we wanted to maintain." The art building's relationship with McAlister Auditorium is especially important, he explains. In order to create a visually pleasing sequence for people driving onto the campus, he designed the art building to line up with the front of McAlister and to be the same height as the front of the building.

Besides fitting in with the campus plan, the new building had to serve the special needs of artists. In fact, their needs partly dictated how the building would look. "If you talk to visual artists, you'll find the studios they like the best are in old converted factories," says Rogers. "They want big spaces to move around in and high ceilings and certain kinds of light."

Because direct sunlight from the south fluctuates and is so intense that it bleaches out colors, artists need the indirect light from the north. The first

The spectacular east-west corridor, which also serves as student gallery, soars 25 feet to a skylight that stretches the length of the building. Lighted after dark by parallel rows of blue lights, the corridor appears to extend beyond the windows into the night.



design Rogers submitted called for a long, narrow building that would have stretched twice the length of the present building. All of the rooms would have been side by side, opening onto a long corridor on the south and lighted from the north. Possible problems with a watermain forced Rogers to revise his first design, in effect folding the building in the middle back upon itself. The final design called for a building with very small windows on the front, south side and very large windows across the back, north side. In this version Rogers put all of the rooms that do not need daylight, such as the main gallery, photography studio and lecture room, on the south side and all of the teaching studios, except printmaking, on the north side. Almost all of the light comes through the north windows and skylights.

Rogers created a feeling of openness and vast space by making most of the rooms large and giving them 24-foot ceilings. In addition, he allows us to see through the walls and ceilings to other rooms and to the outdoors.

Besides well-lighted, large spaces, artists need a place where they can make a mess, he says. This consideration, as well as economics, dictated his use of basic building materials, such as cement block, instead of more finished materials.

Beyond the utilitarian considerations, the rest of the building has to do with his "personal statements." "There are these little ironies, possible contrasts. Funny little things are happening. For instance, there are very rough orchard pavers and then there are the very pure white marble benches, so you see the contrast between this rough stone and the highly polished material."

The blue lights that line both sides of the main hallway are another example. "At night they make a linear statement about light," he says. "But also there's a red plate behind them so when they're on, the light is purple. Artists combine colors all the time. I'm just trying to take common materials and by practicing art, make them more than that."

And practice art he did, at least in the eyes of many observers. The Furman community began to under-



*"I'm just trying to take
common materials and by
practicing art, make them
more than that."*

Charles Rogers

stand the architectural significance of the building last June when the *Architectural Record*, one of the leading architectural journals in the country, indicated an interest in the building.

Margaret Gaskie, a senior editor at the *Record*, flew to Greenville to see it. Approaching first through the back entrance, she stood in the courtyard for a half hour in the 90 degree mid-morning heat just looking at the north side and making notes. She spent the rest of the morning looking at the interior. As architectural critics are wont, at least initially, she was noncommittal in her remarks about the building. When asked if there were other buildings like it in the Southeast or anywhere else, she said there were not.

The September issue of the *Architectural Record* contained an eight-page article about the Thomas Anderson Roe Art Building, illustrated with 12 color photographs by architectural photographer Peter Vanderwarker of Boston. In her article titled "Art lessons," Mrs. Gaskie writes that the building's "witty didacticism" makes it "a working syllabus for the pursuits it houses." The lessons begin at the front door, she says, where the building "bursts to life," introducing the more subtle contradictions in the interior.

Summarizing the points she makes in the article, she writes: "... the aspect most striking to me is the controlled use of contrast on several planes of perception. I think, for example, of the utilitarian, let-it-all-hang-out work

spaces, with their structure and innards exposed, marshalled within a classically formal symmetrical plan. Or the almost hermetic quality of the long frontal facade, contradicted by the prodigality of the portico's celebration of entry. Or the many oppositions of scale and volume, color and texture, transparency and reflectivity that make the whole environment a syllabus for the visual arts. A neat building!"

Even before it was finished last winter, word spread around Greenville that the new building at Furman was different, and local architects began coming to see it. Some found it exciting. Many, who had based their careers on austere Modernist principles, were troubled by its decorative features and by what they perceived as the architects' lack of consistency in style and materials. They said it was an example of Post Modern architecture, a style that seems to contradict many Modernist ideas.

Because of the interest of local architects — and in spite of Charles Rogers' earlier misgivings — Furman scheduled an architectural symposium in October. Rogers and Steven Foote, a partner at Perry Dean who collaborated on the design, consented good naturedly to be on the program. Invited to the symposium were members of the Greenville and Spartanburg Councils of Architecture, as well as students and faculty in Clemson's College of Architecture, and other interested individuals.

The original purpose of the symposium was to provide a setting in which the art building's architects could talk about the building and then local architects could ask questions. To add another perspective to the discussion we decided to invite several architecture critics to take part on the program. We asked these critics to discuss the building in relation to national trends in architecture, to trends in campus architecture and to its role on the Furman campus. Accepting our invitation were Paul M. Sachner, a senior editor of *Architectural Record*; Michael J. Crosbie, senior editor of *Architecture*; Steven Litt, art and architecture critic for the *Raleigh News and Observer*; Catherine Fox, art critic



Lined with offices and studios and lighted from above by daylight, the east-west corridor functions as the art building's "main street." Tinted concrete block, glass block, interior windows and a flagstone floor create the feeling of a European city street.



for the *Atlanta Constitution*; and Richard Maschal, art and architecture critic for the *Charlotte Observer*.

On the day of the symposium, the critics arrived first. Since none of them had seen the building previously, they spent about two hours that morning looking at it, making notes and talking with Furman art students and professors. Like Margaret Gaskie, they did not express any opinions as they looked around, so it was problematical where the afternoon discussion was headed.

Rogers and Foote also arrived during the morning, looking only slightly uneasy. Foote wore a traditional tan business suit, while Rogers wore a long-sleeved, blue-striped shirt and a dark green bow tie and looked more like an artist than a businessman.

About 150 people assembled that afternoon for the discussion. After brief remarks by Furman President John E. Johns and architects Rogers and Foote, Paul Sachner, who served as moderator of the discussion, posed some questions which he suggested should be addressed during the discussion. First, he asked, does the building fit in with the rest of the campus? "Is the building's carefully selected red brick facade and two-story mass sympathetic and harmonious with Furman's existing Neo-Georgian Colonial architecture, or is the structure an ambiguously scaled blank-wall intrusion that turns its back on the campus?"

Next, how do students and faculty who use it like the building? Do they like the extensive use of skylights, clearstory windows and glass block, especially in the studios? "What about the interior palette of materials and colors, that rather idiosyncratic blend of flagstone, concrete block, glass masonry, clear glass, metal and exposed structural and mechanical systems?" he asked. "Do these disparate elements cohere into a lively but unified architectural ensemble or do they form an interior that is characterized primarily by a certain nervous quality? How does

the building function symbolically as an art center? Is it artistically inspiring, neutral or distracting?"

How does the building compare with other recently completed academic buildings? Is it a Modern or a Post Modern building? "Or is it somewhere in between, occupying a middle ground that might be called Late Modernism... or perhaps Post Modern Modern, a term that Ada Louise Huxtable of the *New York Times* coined recently in an article? In the end, does it matter and do we care?"

Sachner then showed slides of recently completed buildings at Vassar, Princeton, Columbia University and the University of Virginia. He said that the Roe Art Building seemed more closely allied to the buildings at Vassar

and Columbia, which he characterized as good examples of Late Modernism, a style that "exhibits basically Modernist tenets but manipulated to harmonize more closely with older adjacent structures."

Michael Crosbie, senior editor of *Architecture*, the official publication of the American Institute of Architecture, congratulated Furman for giving architectural writers an opportunity to see the building after it had been in use for a while. Usually, he said, critics are only invited to see buildings in a pristine state, before they have been occupied. Or before they've "been trashed," as some architects would put it.

"What struck me about the building initially is that it's sort of screened off from the rest of the campus," said



DAVID CROSBY

Painter Tom Flowers, chairman of Furman's art department, works mostly in acrylics and oil. His paintings have won numerous awards, including "Best in Show" in the 23rd annual Springs Mills Art Exhibit and the Art and Architecture Award given by the South Carolina Chapter of the American Institute of Architects. He has held one-man shows throughout the South and in the Midwest, and many of his works are in permanent collections, including those of Chase Manhattan Bank, Vincent Price Enterprises and art museums in North and South Carolina.

A 1954 Furman graduate who attended college on a football scholarship, Flowers received the M.F.A. from the University of Iowa. He has studied and traveled extensively in Europe and received a Fulbright grant to study in India.

At Furman Flowers teaches painting, design, drawing and art history. He has directed foreign study courses in Europe, most recently in Italy.

The circular rotunda at the intersection of the east-west and north-south corridors is the focal point of the building.

Crosbie. "You have these opaque walls of brick that are a good-neighbor gesture toward Furman, but inside something else altogether happens. I think some people see this as the building being naughty about Furman. It's the good neighbor outside and then inside it's sort of off doing its own thing. The students I talked with really like that quality."

Students told him they liked the spaces, the good light and the wooden floors in some of the studios. "Generally they found the building to be inspiring, which I thought for art students was just the perfect type environment they wanted."

The building is deceptive in another way, he said. When you first see it from the outside, it looks very flat and horizontal and long. Yet when you go inside, the predominant feeling is tallness. There is a very vertical type of space which students liked. One student told him that she saw the building as architectural sculpture on the campus.

The students also liked the bright colors. They found the use of color "inspiring," a word they used often. "They said the colors had a freeness to them, that there was sort of an experimentation going on in the interior and they appreciated that. They felt the architect was in a sense prodding them to explore some limits."

He found that students and faculty both appreciated the different use of materials. For instance, they were amazed by the variety of ways the architects had used common concrete blocks. Students said it was a reminder of what they could get out of a material no matter what it was, if it was used in an inventive and creative way.

"One thing I liked about the interior was how it made you feel about this tall," he said, indicating a few inches with his thumb and forefinger. Once you get inside the building, it's sort of like Alice in Wonderland; you've gone to a larger space and the doors are real tall."

"The colors are another thing that remind us of the palette of colors that we appreciated more when we were a lot younger. I think the idea behind the building is — if we are art students —



"If we define art as being an activity that prompts us to think differently... the Roe Art Building is perfectly suited for that."

Michael Crosbie

to prompt us to draw from that innocence we had when we were children, when we were open to things and taking everything in. I think that is something good artists have to maintain throughout their lives. They have to be constantly open, constantly ready to see things in a new way. If we define art as being an activity that prompts us to think differently and to question our preconceptions, I think the Roe Art Building is perfectly suited for that."

Catherine Fox of the *Atlanta Constitution* showed slides of several buildings on the Emory University campus, which unlike those at Furman were designed by a number of different architects and architectural firms. Steven Litt of the *Raleigh News and Observer* showed slides of buildings in Raleigh and at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Of the Roe Art Building, Litt said, "I think I would call it a juicy building. It's full of the kinds of architectural experiences that I'm always looking for. I especially enjoy the way the materials are joined together, the way you can see what's doing the work, the way the different materials work together. I think it's really a remarkable building, so I'm going to declare myself in the camp of the Roe building supporters."

Richard Maschal of the *Charlotte Observer* congratulated Furman, the architects and the donors for what they had achieved. He said he thought the building was "in dialogue with history inside and out" and that it has some nice, Southern touches. "I think the way the outbuildings relate to the main building is a very nice touch. It has the

feeling — if you will forgive the word — almost of a plantation. The flagstones, the pine that's used in the roof ceiling, the kind of shed effect, the bricks, all recall for me this part of the world and the best things this part of the world has produced."

His main disappointment with the building was that the large doors at either end of the east-west corridor are not generally used, thus preventing it from really serving as a street, as it seemed designed to do. Charles Rogers later explained that the east door had to be very large to accommodate traveling exhibits, the west door had to match it, and doors this size could not stand constant use.

After the critics finished their presentations, moderator Paul Sachner invited questions and comments from the audience. One architect asked why there was such a sharp contrast between the finished architecture of the main building and the rather rustic approach to the outbuildings. Rogers and Foote explained that they had intended the outbuildings to be used as storage space for old cars, refrigerators and all sorts of things that artists collect to use in their work. They had not foreseen that the space between the buildings would be used for receptions. "The great irony is that people play chamber music in there. It has become a beautiful inner courtyard. That's fine. But we never intended this wonderful result."

Another local architect commented, "The building strikes me as being obviously a work of art itself. I was wondering what the architects' ideas were about the display of art within this building that is a work of art. With all the bright colors, different materials, the variety and all that takes place, where was it intended that artwork would be displayed?" The architects replied that besides the main gallery, the whole east-west corridor was designed to serve as a gallery.

One architect asked if the building is "honest to itself," with its solid,

As you enter the front lobby, you see the geometric shapes and contrasting materials, such as rough concrete block and highly polished marble, that reoccur throughout the building.



masonry structure on the outside and its exposed structure on the inside. Rogers answered, "In this building we are trying consciously to create a question at every point. To have the building appear the same on the outside as on the inside would have denied the juxtaposition of passing through a brick wall and leaving the classic Furman brick behind you. All of a sudden you never see another brick. It's just one of many levels of juxtaposition."

Another architect commented that he found the interior rather brutal from the standpoint of the exposed structures. Several commented about the small, square windows on the front of the building, and one asked why have any windows at all on that side.

Another said, "I personally think your street gallery area is going to be very much in competition with any kind of art displayed there and the flooring material is completely foreign to what you have tried to do with squares and materials in the building. Even though it's a very playful building, I feel it's going to have a tremendous effect on the type of art that is produced there. As a matter of fact, if some of the paintings that are on display now have been produced since the building opened, you can already see it in both color and splashiness of art — a more playful kind of art."

Rogers replied, "If students say to themselves that they find this irregular flagstone against the squares a terrible contradiction, then I think we've done

what we wanted. Or if they say maybe this is a fun thing to do — or a useful thing to do — to use a rigid grid here and not a rigid grid there. It's just a matter of reacting. If they all react the way you react, that will be fine."

"I personally love the building," said a local developer. "I concur with the gentleman about the flagstones, but I think the architects are to be commended for bringing to Greenville a building worthy of this symposium." The audience applauded.

Richard Maschal asked the architects why they objected so strenuously to the term Post Modern. Steven Foote said they objected for many reasons, but mainly because of the way the term is used to describe all sorts of buildings. Rogers said he objected because once a building is labeled Post Modern, people tend to dismiss it without looking at it closely. "With architecture, like anything else, you spend a lot of time doing it and you like to have people get in there and criticize it. We love to be told where we've missed or where we're wrong, but just to be labeled and walk off down the street, it's irksome."

After further discussion about Modernism and Post Modernism, a Furman graduate who is now an architect said, "It seems to me the Roe building takes important aspects of both schools of thought. It takes the playfulness and use of color and some historic forms and references from Post Modernism. It also has the structural expression of the Modern movement that lets the materials say and be what they are without having to cover them up and turn them into some sort of decorative approach that tried to disguise itself as something else."

"I couldn't have said that better myself," said moderator Paul Sachner. "This is a building of its time. Whether it's Modern or Post Modern, it very much reflects what's going on in architecture today. What more can one want?"

Summing up his reaction to the panel discussion, Sachner said he had not seen slides of any buildings that afternoon that he liked better than the Roe Art Building. Answering the questions he had posed earlier, he said, "I



DAVID CROSBY

Potter, sculptor and watercolorist, Glen Howerton has taught at Furman since 1967. A native of Galena, Kan., he received a master's degree from Fort Hays State College and also studied at the University of Iowa and the University of Georgia. At Furman Howerton teaches ceramics, sculpture, watercolor, three-dimensional design and art education.

His works have been shown widely in exhibitions in this country and abroad, including the Ceramic National Exhibit in Syracuse, N.Y., the National Watercolor Show in Peoria, Ill., and the Concorso Internazionale Della Ceramic in Faenza, Italy. He is a member of the South Carolina Watercolor Society and South Carolina Crafts Guild.

don't feel it turns a blank wall to the campus. I think the materials and the scale are just right, yet it does make an architectural statement. It's not the Neo-Georgian, the Neo-Neo-Georgian revival of the other Furman buildings. I think this building is the most important piece of architecture on the campus, besides the campus itself."

Both Richard Maschal and Steven Litt later wrote long articles about the building for their respective newspapers. In the October 31 issue of the *Charlotte Observer*, Maschal said the Roe Art Building is "an example of the best of Post Modernism. It values history, not for empty allusions, but for inspiration and ideas."

Bemoaning the "suffocating cloud of mediocrity" that pervades new architecture in the Raleigh area, Litt wrote in the October 12 issue of the *Raleigh Observer*, "This is never clearer than when a new building in the Southeast sets high standards and puts North Carolina in general and the Triangle in particular to shame." The new Roe Art Building at Furman "exhibits an entirely different attitude toward architecture," he wrote. "The building is a delight."

To put these rave reviews into proper perspective, Rogers himself tells of walking into the building behind an older gentleman who, as soon as he opened the door, said, "Start right here. Start wrecking it right here."

Although people disagree about the art building, they haven't ignored it. Thousands have toured it since it opened, attracted by the exhibits, the newspaper and magazine articles and the comments of those who have seen it. Obviously this pleases Charles Rogers, and Furman benefits from such public attention.

But the real success of the art building will be measured by its effect on the art program. Demand for art courses has already almost tripled, and a record number of this year's freshmen have indicated an interest in majoring in art. Art students are taking their work more seriously, and professors are more productive because they have plenty of space in which to work. The building itself seems to suggest infinite possibilities for the future of Furman's visual arts. □



With high ceilings, concrete and wooden floors, new equipment and natural light, large studios provide the ideal work space for ceramics (top), sculpture, design, painting and printmaking. Two outbuildings, containing kilns, foundry and storage space, house the "dirty" processes of ceramics and sculpture. In good weather students work outside in the courtyard, which also provides a gracious setting for occasional receptions.

CONSISTENTLY INCONSISTENT

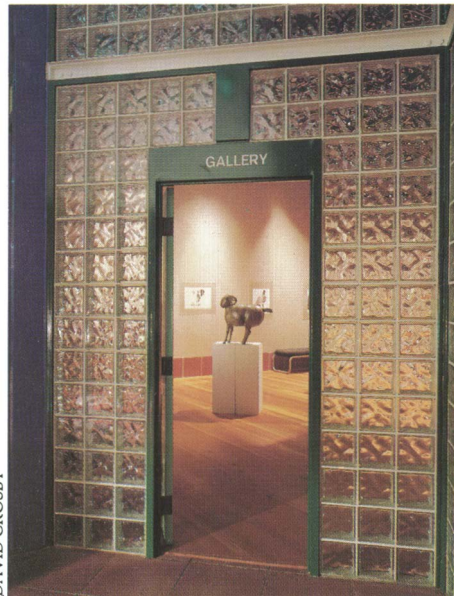
A TOUR OF THE ROE ART BUILDING

BY R. OLOF SORENSEN

The Roe Art Building is a series of contradictions, of opposites, of contrasts. Certainly the most exciting building on campus, its architect dared to take a chance, to make this building a continuation of the Furman architectural tradition while at the same time making it a Post Modern building — although the architect rejects this controversial label. No one comes away from a walk through its halls without admitting to an extraordinary architectural experience.

The front, southern facade is a tall narrow glass portico topped with a pediment juxtaposed with extremely long, horizontal, windowless brick walls. It repeats a Furman theme — portico and pediment — that appears on every campus building, but nowhere exactly the same. It is an individual echo of the Furman slate roof, entrance and colonial brick.

A walk around the right side of the building shows that the transparent view through the width of the building is repeated on the east, enabling you to see through its entire length. Continuing to walk around the building, you pass a concealed courtyard and turn toward the rear or northern entrance. Here you find even more contrast. Completely windowless walls extend in both directions from a beautifully curved opening which allows entry into the courtyard and the north entrance of the building, a repeat of the south entrance. Continue around the west end where another curved wall partly



DAVID CROSBY

Professional exhibits are displayed year-round in the Thompson Gallery.

allows for a small basement mechanical room. Further along, note yet another transparent portico, this time a repeat of the east exit, with its 14-foot doors.

A play of light and space is in store for the visitor who finally enters the building through that narrow, vertical slab of glass at the south portico. After a smaller version of the porch (designed as an air lock to prevent heat and air loss) you are in what can only be described as the grand entrance hallway. Vertical and narrowing as it plunges toward the opposite side of the building, the hall features marble-faced display cases, geometrically patterned concrete block and flagstone floors. Go through a lowered portion and enter the rotunda, the focal point of the Roe Art Building.

Brilliantly lit from above by a glass

roof, its circularity half defined by curved plaster forms, this semi-contemporary, semi-Renaissance space is fit for a string quartet. To the east and west, skylit halls extend the length of the building, their structural elements delineated by brilliant yellow, while the windows are outlined in iridescent blue and the doors in two shades of green. Far above, running the entire length of the halls, are intensely red square forms, and from each protrudes an equally brilliant blue bulb. The color, combined with the daylight streaming through the glass roof, is pure joy; natural daylight streams down on both walls, one designed as a hall gallery with cloth-covered panels, the other, glass brick which allows light to penetrate the darker corners of the work areas.

A step into any studio off this east-west hallway will show you how all the studios are designed. With practical concrete floors; with pipes, wires, light fixtures and heating and cooling ducts exposed; with the same brilliant trim as in the hall; and with glass brick behind you and a glass wall in front, facing the courtyard, you are reminded of a Bauhaus factory design. Turn around and notice that the high ceilings do not waste space. Each studio has a

Tom Flowers works with painting students on technique, composition and color theory. Advanced students have space of their own in the loft that extends the length of the painting studio.



12-foot loft extending its entire length, intended as studio space for advanced students. On the opposite side of the east-west hall you find the printmaking studio (lit with skylights) and photographic laboratories. From here you can walk through a 37' x 37' gallery, windowless but lit with professional track lights, its walls covered with cloth panels, its floors in natural wood, its door facing the secretary's office directly across the hall, for extra security.

Cross the entrance hallway and enter the lecture room designed for art history classes. It is decorated in blue, with its own raised room for audio-visuals, and its camera and projectors

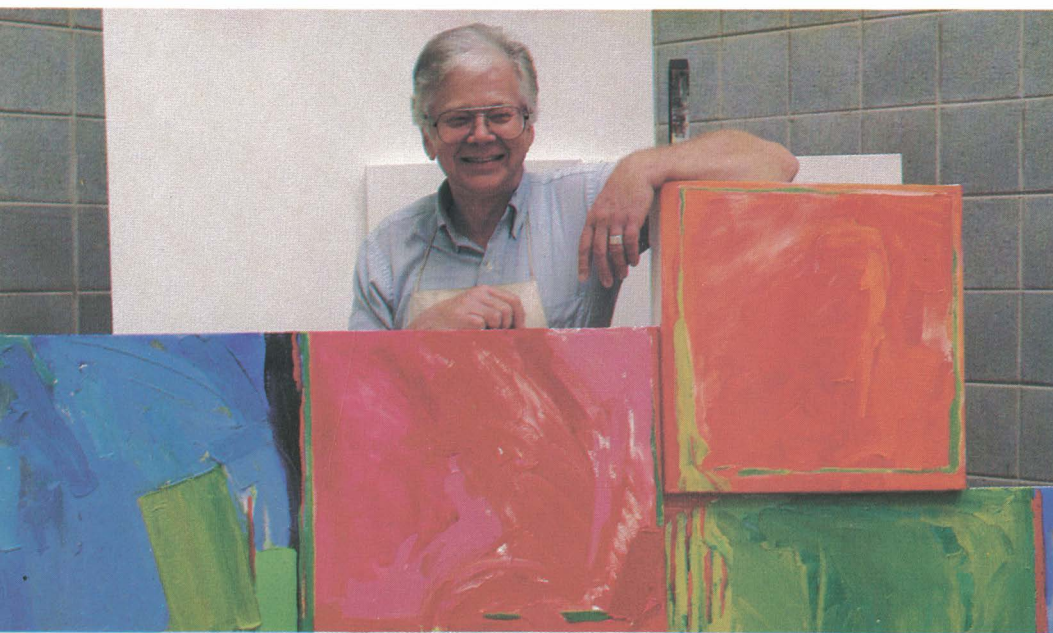


Tall glass doors and windows at both ends of the corridor allow a transparent view through the entire length of the building.

are operated by remote control. Pass through an exit at the side of the slide library room, and you enter an octagonal lounge for students, backed by a seminar room for smaller academic classes or for slide sessions. Finally you arrive at three faculty offices, each with its own studio. Two additional office-studio suites are on the north side of the building and a small kitchen/faculty lounge and lavatories are off either side of the exit hallway.

Exit from the north hallway into the courtyard. Here is a completely private outdoor space formed by the main building to the south, narrow storage and kiln/foundry buildings to the north, and terminated by brick walls at both ends. Note the geometric forms of the ground area, the use of the pink stone set into the concrete in repetition of interior patterns. During good weather this designed outdoor space is available for students working on sculpture, ceramics, or painting, since all studios open directly onto this court. To reduce costs the rear buildings where the "dirty" processes of ceramics and sculpture take place are neither heated nor air conditioned. Your tour is complete as you exit through the rear pylons into the parking lot.

Designed to line up with McAlister Auditorium, the Roe Art Building both conforms to and deviates from the campus style. It is an example of intentional eclecticism — part medieval fortress and Egyptian temple, part steel and glass, part 1930s Art Deco and part exposed structure reminiscent of the Beauburg Center in Paris. It is an example of planned inconsistency, exploiting these contrasts for spatial and visual effect. Says Vice President for Development Moffett Kendrick, "People are going to love this building and they'll never know why they love it." They will love it because it's pure delight. □



Since coming to Furman in 1974, R. Olof Sorensen has served as both art history and studio professor. A native of North Dakota, he received the M.F.A. degree from Pratt Institute and the Ph.D. from Ohio University. Besides art history, he also teaches printmaking and advertising design.

Sorensen, whose paintings are of the Abstract Expressionist school, has held a number of one-man exhibits, including ones in New York and Baltimore. He has served as a member of the board of trustees of the Greenville County Museum of Art and currently serves on the board of directors of the Southern Graphics Council. He recently prepared a catalogue of one of Furman's pre-Columbian collections, which are now on display in the Roe Art Building.

The passage between the two outbuildings creates a dramatic approach to the back entrance.



MINISTRY OF CELEBRATION

BY TERRY WALTERS

*From Gregorian chants
to religious frescoes,
Faulton Hodge serves up
spiritual food for pilgrims
of every denomination.*

I first heard of the Reverend J. Faulton Hodge from religion professor Dr. Joe King. He stopped by the office one afternoon several years ago to say there was a Furman alumnus, an Episcopal minister, whose churches up in Ashe County, N.C., were drawing national attention.

He spoke of Faulton Hodge, a member of the class of 1951, and how he had brought a dying mountain parish back to vibrant life, and about some unusual frescoes that were attracting visitors by the tens of thousands to his two small churches.

King had visited Father Hodge and the churches many times. He had even preached at St. Mary's one Sunday. He had been struck by the spirit of celebration he found there: "Every Sunday a full house of people coming from far and near, with banners flying, the fragrance of incense, choruses and hymns sung with great enthusiasm, and always a helpful message given in the same spirit — true spiritual food for Christians of every denomination."

It wasn't long before I was reading about Hodge in feature articles sent in from the *Atlanta Journal and Constitution*, *Carolina Country* and *Country Journal*.

The articles told how Hodge had entered the ministry late, after spending years in the fashion industry. Originally from the small town of Rutherfordton, N.C., he had worked for a number of years in New York as a fashion designer. Then, suddenly, he underwent a conversion experience (as he puts it,



Father Hodge and his congregation restored Holy Trinity Church in Ashe County, N.C.

"Christ took hold of my life"). At age 35, he felt called to the Episcopal ministry.

After three years at the General Seminary of the Episcopal Church, Hodge was ordained and assigned to the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York. There, his duties included counseling married couples and working with troubled teen-agers in the Hispanic community.

Several years later, in 1972, Father Hodge was assigned to a parish of his own — but what a change from the nation's largest Episcopal cathedral and its huge urban congregation! Situated

in a remote area of the Blue Ridge Mountains, the parish encompassed all of Ashe and Alleghany counties and part of Watauga, but in that vast area numbered only 13 members. One of his two churches, St. Mary's in Beaver Creek, was ill-equipped and sparsely attended on those occasions when a visiting minister came to conduct services; the other, Holy Trinity in nearby Glendalesprings, had fallen into ruin since the last full-time minister had left in 1934.

With little to go on except faith and determination, Father Hodge set out to rebuild. He traveled into the remote corners of his parish to visit the sick, and he initiated food delivery and services for shut-ins. He varied Sunday services to include lots of hymns and older, more informal types of worship, such as communal laying on of hands and blessings for the sick, the elderly, the young. The church began to grow.

After a year, the congregation was up to nearly 150, and then something wonderful happened that transformed the little churches. At a party, Father Hodge met a young artist, Ben Long, who had been in Italy studying the ancient but now largely neglected art of fresco painting. Long had been seeking — in vain — for a church in his native North Carolina where he might paint a religious fresco. With characteristic

Artist Ben Long's "The Mystery of Faith" is one of the frescoes that draw thousands of tourists to Hodge's two churches.



enthusiasm, Father Hodge offered St. Mary's, although he first had to find out from Long what, exactly, a fresco was.

Long explained that, unlike a mural that is painted on a finished surface, a fresco is actually painted into a wall or panel. To create a fresco, a mixture of pure sand and lime is applied to the surface, and pigments are brushed on while the mixture is still wet. With passage of time, the colors deepen and become more beautiful.

The first fresco Long painted for St. Mary's caused a sensation. "Mary, Great with Child," a life-sized representation of Jesus' mother pregnant, drew worldwide press attention. Hundreds of the curious came to see for themselves, and to be moved by the very human Mary that Long had painted.

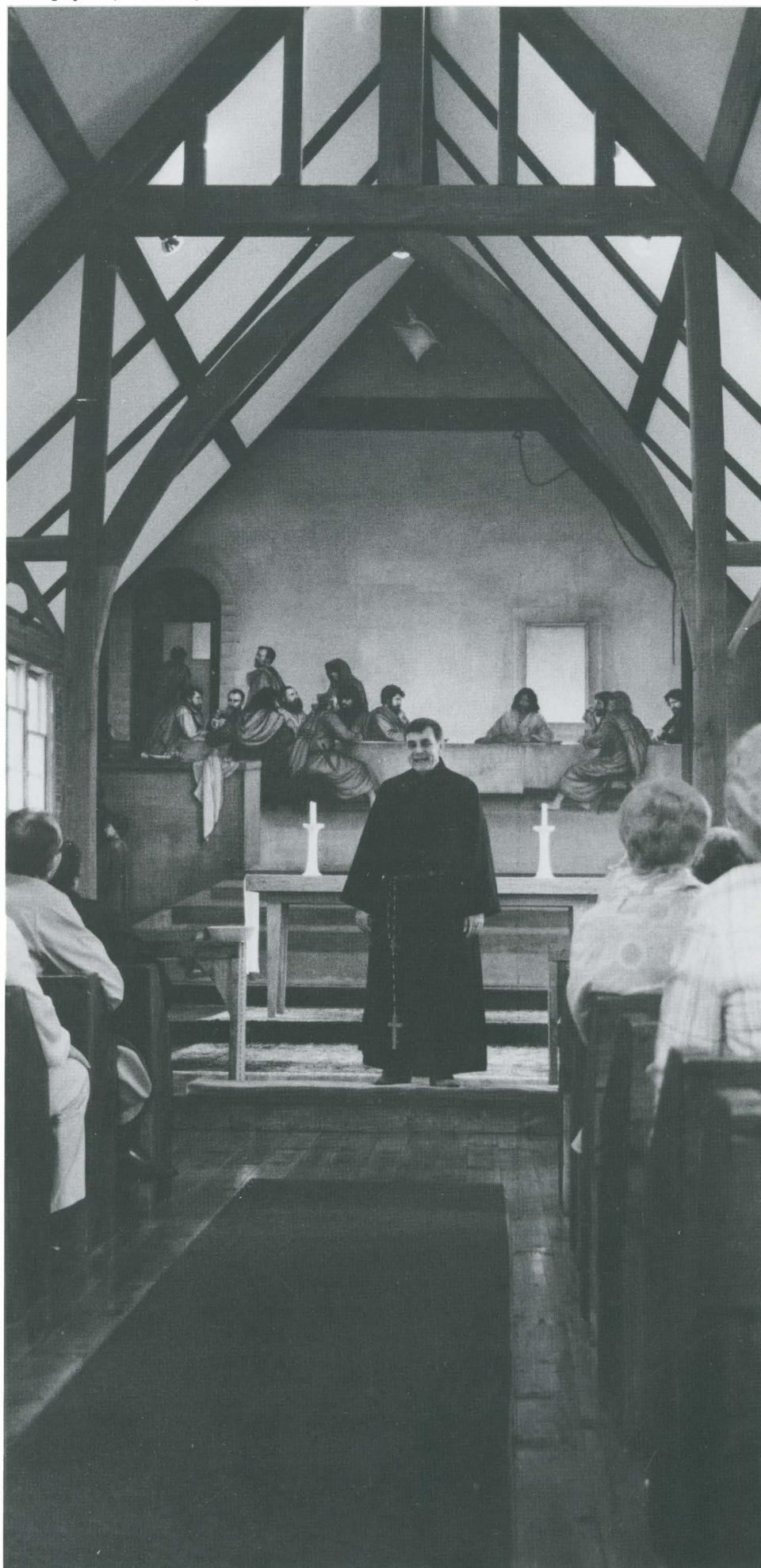
There followed two more frescoes at St. Mary's — "John the Baptist" and the large "Mystery of Faith" that dominates the front wall. For these works and others done in Italy, Long received the prestigious Leonardo da Vinci International Art Award. The fame of St. Mary's and its dynamic pastor spread.

In 1978, Father Hodge and his congregation were able to begin restoration of Holy Trinity Church and the Mission House across the street. Two years later, Long returned with 20 student helpers to work on his most ambitious fresco, "The Last Supper," that now adorns the front of Holy Trinity.

In my reading, I learned that today's congregation numbers nearly 400 and that more than a quarter million tourists visit Father Hodge's churches each year.

I had to see for myself. When I phoned to arrange an interview, Father Hodge said come right ahead — and I would be welcome to stay at the Mission House. If I preferred, there was a recently restored inn in the now thriving Glendalesprings. Whatever I did, I must certainly stay for pot luck lunch after the Wednesday morning worship service.

Arriving late Tuesday evening, I was surprised to find both Holy Trinity Church and the Mission House still open. (I learned later that they are kept open night and day, on the honor system, to welcome visitors.) I was also somewhat surprised, after all the publicity, at the diminutive scale of the church, but not in the least disappointed in its charm or in the moving beauty of "The Last Supper." Painted entirely in earth tones, the scene is at once folksy and sublime. The Upper Room appears to be an extension of



the church itself, and an empty stool in the foreground invites the viewer to join in breaking bread.

After studying the fresco for a while in the quiet, serene church — surely the best way to appreciate it — I made my way across the road to the Mission House.

As it turned out, Father Hodge was away on a pastoral visit, but I was welcomed warmly by several church members. A rustic, two-story building, the Mission House serves not only as Father Hodge's home and office and as a refuge for travelers, but also — another surprise — as an art center.

It seems the frescoes have inspired an artistic renaissance in the entire area. Works by scores of local artists and craftsmen, many of whom first discovered their talents while the frescoes were being painted, line the walls of the Mission House. Most are for sale, here again on the honor system. To buy a painting or piece of pottery, you simply leave your money in the plate.

The next morning, when I finally met Father Hodge after hearing so much about him, it was like greeting an old friend. A stocky man of medium height, he has twinkling eyes, a ready smile, great warmth and a seemingly boundless supply of energy. He was delighted, he said, to talk with someone from Furman, but he had to take care of a few things as we talked.

What followed was a running interview, as I tried to keep up with his incredibly busy morning's round.

We started off in the garden, where he did some weeding before gathering an armload of late-blooming phlox he would later arrange to decorate a small chapel for the morning's service. Even the garden is part of the church's ministry, he explained. Each Thursday, eight to ten people gather to have a prayer and then work in the garden as they learn the art of landscaping from a local expert.

Father Hodge spoke of his two years at Furman. A transfer from Mars Hill College, he majored in sociology, and was elected president of the sociology club. He described sociology professor Laura Ebaugh as "the greatest inspiration in the world," especially because of her enthusiasm for others' creativity. He said another big influence on his

*The Upper Room in the fresco
of "The Last Supper"
appears to be an extension
of the church itself,
and an empty stool invites
the viewer to join in
breaking bread.*

life had been Charles Blackwood, who taught art history. (Little did Hodge realize then that he would one day help to make art history through his sponsorship of the frescoes in Ashe County.)

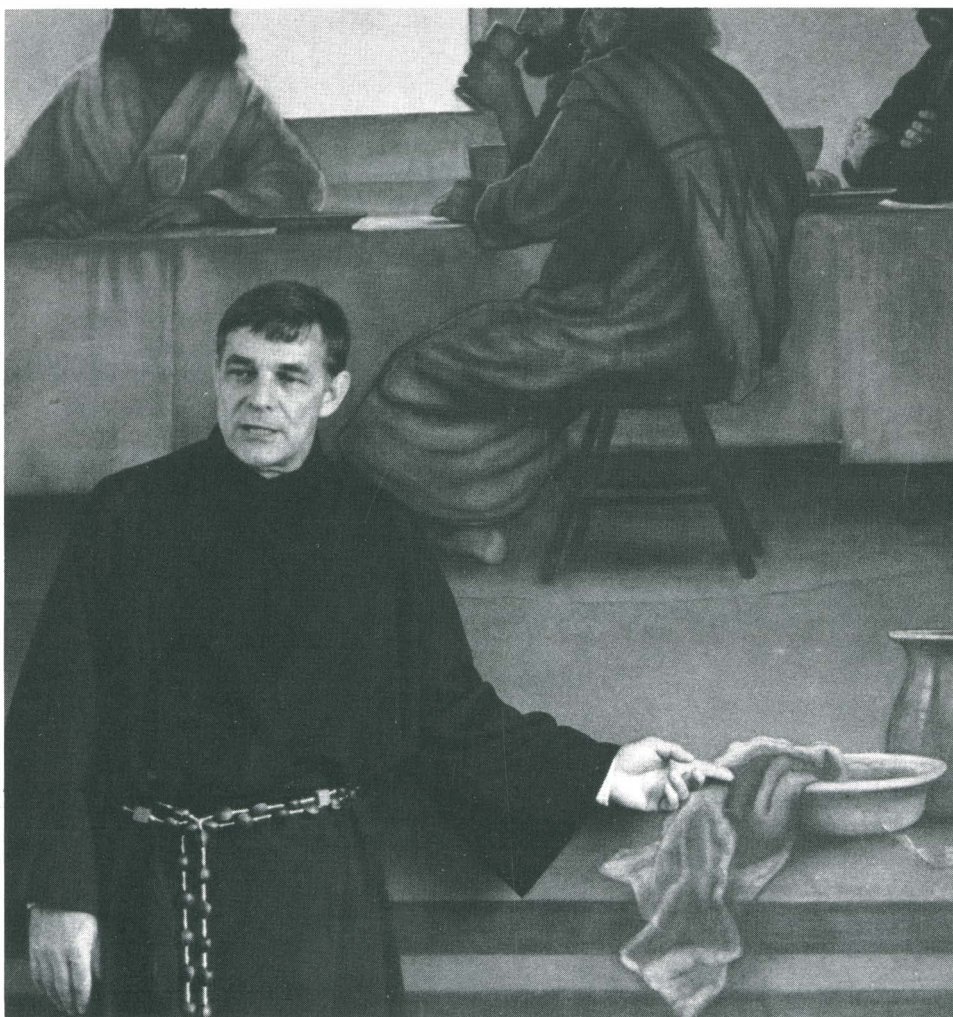
Soon we were joined by journalists from the *Atlanta Constitution* and the CBS affiliate in Charlotte, who were also doing features on Father Hodge and his churches. Father Hodge took us all on a tour of the grounds, pointing out in particular a recently completed outdoor altar and large baptismal pool he had designed and helped build out of local mountain stone. Among

the forms of worship he has introduced or reintroduced to his Episcopalian flock are baptism by immersion, the biblical ritual of foot-washing, and an annual pilgrimage by barges and boats to bless the New River that runs behind the Mission House.

As he talked about these services and others, he said they varied from Anglo-Catholic to Quaker. He smiled as he quoted his bishop as saying, "Father Hodge lies somewhere between Oral Roberts and the Bishop of Rome." More seriously, Father Hodge explained, "I have no earthly idea of the program of church services. We may sing Gregorian chants or 'Amazing Grace,' but whatever we have to offer in worship, we offer the best of that."

Next he was off to bury a St. Bernard dog in the pet cemetery close by the Mission House. He has a service for such occasions, too, where people express their thanks for the joy pets have brought into their lives. Each October, as well, there is a community-wide "blessing of the animals," to which people bring everything from dogs and cats to goats and ducks.

He left us for a while, to counsel privately with a couple about where they wished to have their burial plot.



Father Hodge welcomes visitors to Holy Trinity Church (left) and explains how local people served as models for the disciples in Long's fresco of "The Last Supper" (right).



Then it was out to greet the day's first busload of tourists converging on Holy Trinity. Although there is a regular schedule of volunteers who conduct tours of the churches and talk about the frescoes, Father Hodge greets many of the visitors himself.

He told a church-full of people how "The Last Supper" had brought a new ecumenical spirit to Glendalesprings. During the summer Long was at work, there was the problem of taking care of his 20 student helpers and their families. Many slept on the floor of the Mission House and some in tents on the grounds. At first the local residents had been somewhat suspicious of these outsiders, but when they saw what was being created, they pitched in to help. Farmers brought fresh vegetables; one contributed 200 dozen eggs. Then the various church groups took turn about — the Baptists feeding the artists one day, then the Pentecostals, the Catholics and the Methodists.

Father Hodge pointed out that Long had used local people as models for the disciples — a Jewish farmer for Matthew, the local pharmacist as Andrew, Long himself as Thomas — and Hodge as the servant. Long even included an old mountain dog that wandered in to visit.

By now, it was time for the Wednesday morning communion service, conducted in a miniature chapel to the side of Holy Trinity. As Dr. King

The newest fresco, painted by Jeffrey Mims, decorates a small chapel downstairs in Holy Trinity Church (above). An energetic man who seems to spend little time in his Mission House office (right), Father Hodge obviously enjoys talking about his unorthodox ministry.

had promised, it was a lively service, full of celebration. At one point, Father Hodge called out the open door to invite the tourists, especially a man in a wheelchair, to join us. As we clasped hands to wish Lorraine, one of the churchworkers, a blessed birthday, it was easy to appreciate what Father Hodge meant when he spoke of "the powerful community of love that is the church."

We gathered for lunch in the Mission House kitchen. There, over a delicious, steaming hot stew prepared by the women of the church and served in handmade pottery bowls, Father Hodge told about some of the other work of the church. Of the women who gather each week to sew, of the work with retarded and handicapped children that goes on all summer, of the recently reopened roadside chapel, St. Matthews in Todd, that welcomes travelers of all religious faiths.

Naturally, we kept coming back to the frescoes and what they have meant to the region. Father Hodge said, "I had no earthly idea the frescoes would have such an impact on the state. Now

they are even on the state tourist map. And, of course, they have been an economic boost to the whole area."

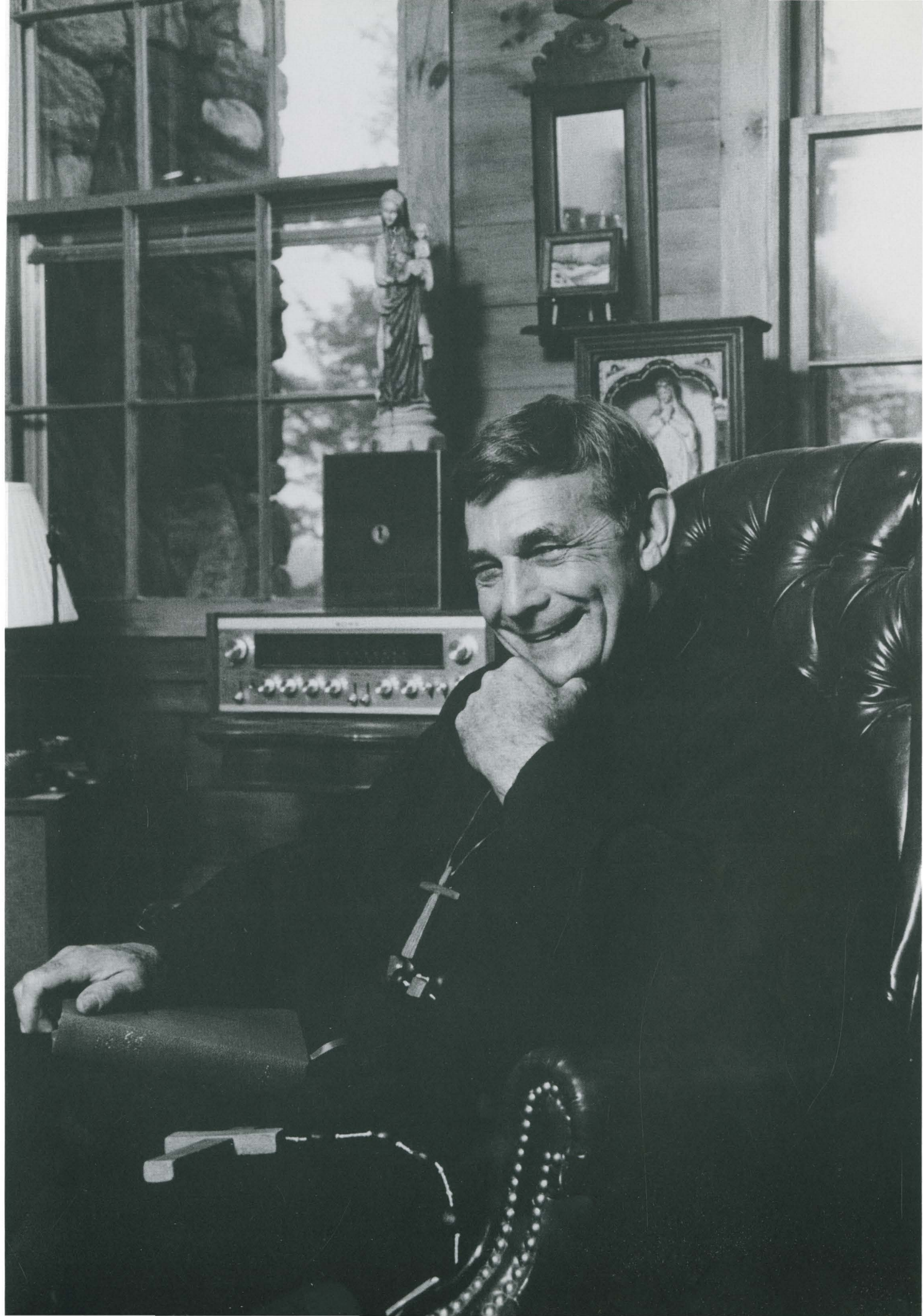
For Father Hodge, however, the meaning goes deeper. He says, "The reason for our being is to love God and give praise and thanks for our life and our life forever through Jesus Christ. We see the frescoes simply as a tool to help us proclaim that message to the thousands of pilgrims who come here each year. If one soul can be inspired, or one heart lifted or one spirit renewed, then it is worth everything."

After lunch it was time to leave Glendalesprings, to visit St. Mary's over in Beaver Creek before heading back to Greenville. I left reluctantly. My last glimpse of Father Hodge was of a brown-robed figure standing in the middle of the road in front of Holy Trinity. He was waving his arms about, trying to bring order out of a traffic jam of six large tour buses delivering more pilgrims to view the frescoes.

Father Hodge would make sure the visitors heard, as well, his message of love and hope and spiritual renewal.

(In January 1987, Father Hodge announced that he will take a one-year leave of absence from his parish, for health reasons.) □

Terry Walters is director of publications at Furman.



RATING FURMAN

BY JIM STEWART

*In a recent survey,
alumni of the fifties, sixties
and seventies expressed
their opinions of Furman
and other colleges.*

Furman University alumni tend, on the whole, to be satisfied with their experience at Furman and their relationship with the university after graduation — but they also see room for improvement.

Alumni are proud of being Furman graduates and give the school high marks for its contribution to their personal and professional development, but only one out of four feels involved in the university today.

Many alumni believe Furman does an excellent job of keeping them informed about current developments at the school, but they also think Furman could do a better job of providing career-oriented services, including helping them with professional contacts and providing career or graduate school counseling.

These findings, and others, were determined in a survey of alumni conducted by Admissions Marketing Group (AMG) of Boston, Mass., in the spring of 1985. The alumni survey was one of five surveys of Furman's primary publics supported by a \$32,900 grant from the Consortium for the Advancement of Private Higher Education (CAPHE) and matching funds raised by Furman. Other groups surveyed were prospective students who had contacted Furman's Admissions Office, prospective students who had been admitted to Furman, parents of prospective students, and local prospective students. Findings from these surveys are now being used in the revision of



Among Furman's most well-known graduates of the fifties is Richard W. Riley, former Governor of South Carolina, shown here in his undergraduate days with Margaret Riddle (left) and Rachel Owens.

Admissions publications and procedures and by other offices.

The alumni survey was designed to determine the alumni's impressions of Furman and its competition, their opinions of Furman today as opposed to when they were students, and their ideas about how Furman can improve its alumni services. The survey also asked a number of demographic and behavioral questions. AMG mailed the survey to 2,250 alumni selected randomly from three groups: the classes of 1950-54, 1962-66 and 1970-74.

A total of 683 questionnaires were

returned for a response rate of just over 30 percent. Forty-seven percent of those who responded graduated between 1966 and 1975; 27 percent graduated between 1956 and 1965; and 25 percent graduated in 1955 or before. Thirty-six percent majored in the humanities, 34 percent in social sciences, 19 percent in fine arts and 13 percent in natural sciences. All but 14 percent lived in the South; 17 percent lived in the Greenville area and 42 percent in South Carolina.

Fifty-five percent of those who responded were male. Forty percent had incomes of over \$50,000; 82 percent were married; and 78 percent had children. Most were working in the private or non-profit sectors, in professional or managerial positions. Sixty-eight percent had made a monetary contribution to Furman in the year before the survey was taken.

Alumni Involvement

AMG asked alumni to rate their relationship to Furman when they were students and today, according to two characteristics: involvement vs. disinterest and pride in Furman vs. a sense of disappointment. They were asked to use a rating scale of 1 to 5, with 1 indicating pride or involvement and 5 indicating lack of interest or disappointment.

Sixty-nine percent said they were involved as students, but only 26 percent said they are involved today. Twenty-five percent rated themselves neutral as students; 40 percent consider

their relationship neutral today. Six percent were disinterested as students, compared to 33 percent today.

Eighty-eight percent of alumni said they were proud of their association with the school as students, and 90 percent are proud as alumni. Eight percent felt neutral toward the school as students and as alumni.

When asked to rate Furman's contribution to their personal and professional development, alumni again gave the school high marks. Ninety-five percent said Furman contributed a great deal to their personal development; 88 percent rated Furman high in contributing to their professional development.

Alumni Services

Alumni were asked to rate the importance of 12 services Furman provides or assists them with, including such programs as reunions, alumni travel tours and the Class Agent Program.

Fifty-two percent rated keeping up to date with current developments at Furman as highly important. No other category received as much support. Furman's performance in this area was judged excellent by 62 percent of those who responded and was considered adequate by 37 percent.

Information on activities of other alumni was given a high degree of importance by 34 percent of the respondents. Thirty-seven percent rated Furman's performance in this category excellent, and 57 percent rated it adequate.

Furman did not fare as well in the area of career-oriented services. Forty-four percent considered helping alumni with professional contacts highly important, and 43 percent gave the same rating to career and graduate school counseling. However, 61 percent were unaware of how Furman could help them use professional networks, and 48 percent had no knowledge of what Furman offers in career counseling. When asked what services they would most like to see Furman expand or improve, alumni cited the career categories more than any others.

According to Nagel Cushman, director of career planning and placement, her office does offer career guidance to alumni, although this service has not been publicized widely. The office provides testing and job-referral information and maintains a career resource register, which lists alumni and their specific fields. In addition, the Job Development Advisory Council, a student group, helps



link Furman students with alumni in various fields.

Furman Yesterday and Today

AMG asked alumni to describe how Furman had changed for the better — and for the worse — since their student days.

Twenty-one percent cited improvement in Furman's facilities as the greatest advancement the school has made, and another 18 percent said that the campus is better. This result is not surprising, considering that graduates of the fifties and early sixties would have attended some or all of their classes at the old campus in downtown Greenville. Ten percent said Furman's biggest improvement is in academics, and 8 percent cited athletics.

Twenty-two percent said that cost is the main area in which Furman has changed for the worse, and it's no secret that costs have risen markedly over the years. Students who entered in 1950 paid \$725 per year for tuition, room and board; those who entered in 1962 paid \$1,500; and those who entered in 1970 paid \$2,462. The cost for students enrolled in the 1986-87 academic year is \$9,850.

When asked their opinion of Furman's cost today, 44 percent of the alumni said the school is expensively priced; 44 percent said it is appropriately priced; 1 percent said it is inexpensive; and 11 percent were not sure.

Although Furman's fees have increased substantially, the university's cost compares favorably to that of other top private, liberal-arts institutions. And in recent years, Furman has been featured in a number of college handbooks, including *The Best Buys in College Education* and *Cutting College Costs*, that relate the cost of college to the value students receive from their college educations.

Some alumni also thought Furman has changed for the worse in that it has become too liberal and lacks discipline (13 percent); has snobby, unfriendly students (10 percent); and has become too elitist (7 percent).

Thirty-two percent of the alumni said the one area in which Furman could have done a better job for them was career guidance. Twelve percent said Furman could have offered a better curriculum; 11 percent cited academic or general counseling; and 10 percent said they wished Furman had offered more opportunities for experience in the working world.

The survey also asked about alumni's perceptions of Furman, then and now. In virtually every category, alumni who



THE SIXTIES

rated Furman as very strong in an area during their student days said the school has improved, although older alumni tended to be more enthusiastic and to see more dramatic changes than did younger alumni.

The academic quality of the student body, the quality of campus life, and Furman's reputation in and out of South Carolina were considered stronger today. Alumni also perceived significant improvement in Furman's prestige, competitiveness among other well-known institutions, graduate-school placement rate and financial aid. In addition, of the 67 percent who said Furman's association with the Baptist denomination was very strong when they were in school, only 48 percent considered it very strong today.

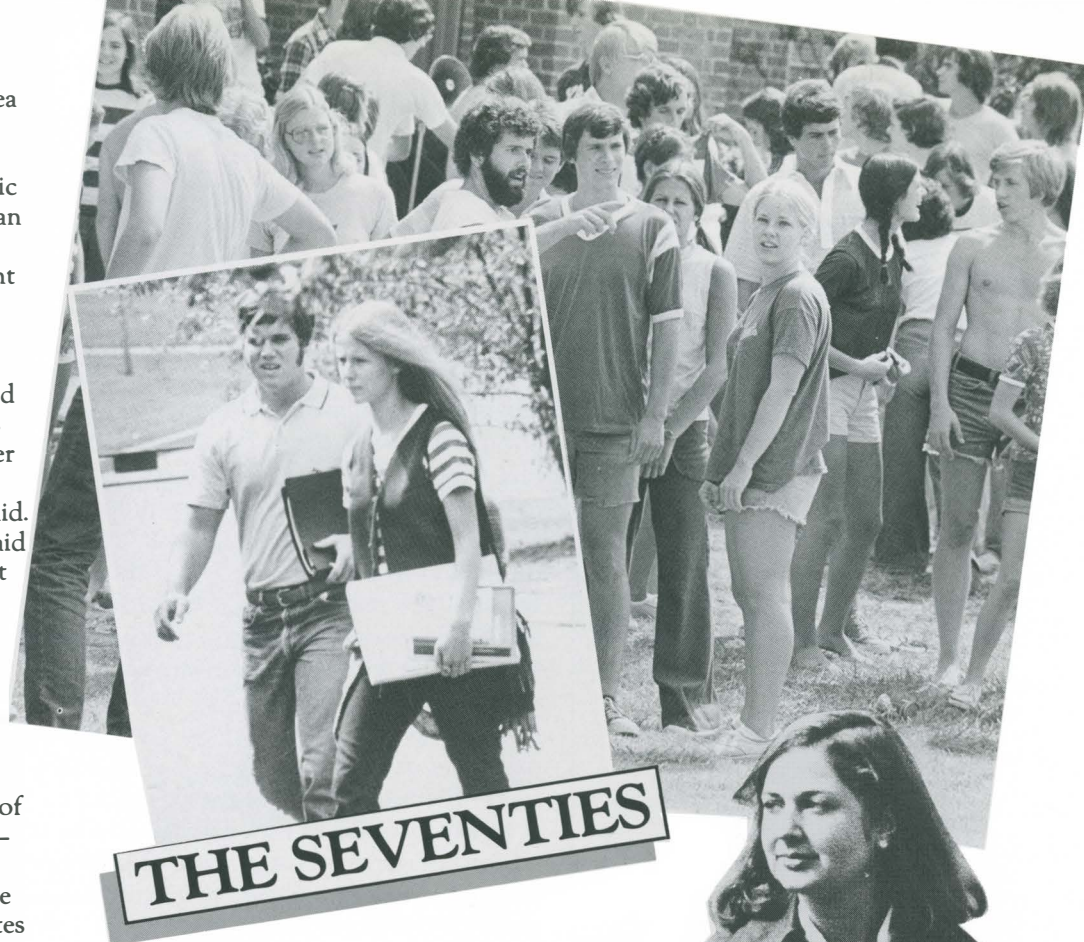
Furman and the Competition

Alumni were given a list of 25 adjectives and asked to choose the four that best described their impressions of Furman and of seven other colleges — Clemson, Davidson, Emory, Georgia, North Carolina, Vanderbilt and Wake Forest — with whom Furman competes for students.

Furman's strongest images were intellectual (66 percent), good facilities (46 percent), expensive (42 percent) and competitive (36 percent). None of the other schools was rated as high in these areas except North Carolina, which was rated more competitive (42 percent). Davidson (58 percent), Emory (56 percent) and Vanderbilt (49 percent) were ranked behind Furman on the intellectual image; Vanderbilt (49 percent), Emory (46 percent) and North Carolina (44 percent) were rated more prestigious than Furman (33 percent). Furman was considered the most conservative, most personal, most religious and most spiritual school of those mentioned.

In a related question, alumni were asked to list three institutions they considered to be Furman's strongest competition. Davidson was named most frequently, by 22 percent of those responding. Others, in order, were Clemson (21 percent), Wake Forest (12 percent), South Carolina (11 percent), Duke (8 percent), Wofford (5 percent), Emory (4 percent), Vanderbilt (3 percent) and South Carolina State (3 percent).

Alumni were also asked where they would submit an application today if they were applying to a college. Fifty percent of those who responded said they would again apply to Furman; the other half divided their choices among 148 institutions, with North Carolina receiving the most votes (37).



Recommendations

In summary, an AMG report on the alumni survey said, "It is clear that there are differences among generations in the way the school is viewed and that younger alumni are especially interested, more likely to be critical, but nevertheless loyal to the university."

Based on research findings, AMG made a number of recommendations, including more frequent publication of the *Furman Magazine*, more involvement of alumni in student recruitment and the development of a career resource network. It also recommended that the university make a greater effort to inform alumni of Furman's growing national reputation and of the career preparation programs available to current students. Several university offices, including Alumni Services and University Relations, are in the process of implementing many of these recommendations. □

A 1976 Furman graduate, Jim Stewart served as director of the Furman news service in 1979-82. He joined Furman's University Relations Office as a writer last fall, after serving four years as sports copy editor at the Winston-Salem Journal.





A NEW LOOK AND A SPECIAL ISSUE

The *Furman Magazine* is back, with a new look.

After following the same basic format for the past 15 years, the magazine has been redesigned, to give it a more contemporary look and to make it compatible with other Furman publications. Beginning with this special issue featuring the Roe Art Building, the magazine will be published twice a year.

Like many other college alumni magazines, the *Furman Magazine* has been affected by economic considerations, especially in recent years. First published in 1941 as the "Alumni Number" of the *Furman University Bulletin*, the magazine appeared four times a year until 1951. During most of the fifties it was published six times a year, and then in the sixties it returned to a quarterly schedule. In the early seventies, when a recession forced widespread retrenchment in higher education, the number of issues of the *Furman Magazine* was cut back to three a year. In subsequent years, as printing costs escalated and the magazine budget remained approximately the same, the number of issues was reduced to two a year and finally to one.

In the late sixties Furman, like many other colleges, began to publish a tabloid newspaper for alumni. Appearing four times a year, the newspaper at first served as a supplement to the magazine. It carried comparatively short news stories about the university and alumni, including Class News, while the magazine covered subjects in greater depth. As the number of magazine issues decreased, the issues of *Furman Reports* remained constant, and it became the main channel of information to alumni.

Because printing a newspaper costs much less than printing a magazine, many colleges and universities eventually dropped their magazines altogether in favor of a newspaper. In the past few years, however, some colleges have rediscovered the value of a magazine in the total communications program, and they have resurrected their magazines in impressive new formats.

Committed to the continued publication of the *Furman Magazine*, the Furman administration has increased the magazine budget this year to allow the publication of two issues. Eventually, we hope, the magazine will again be published four times a year. Although we were able to obtain extra funds to print color photographs inside this special issue, we probably will not be able to afford this luxury again soon.

Because we believe both magazine and newspaper offer particular advantages and serve different purposes, we will continue to publish four issues of *Furman Reports*, as well as two issues of the magazine. *Furman Reports* will keep you abreast of current happenings at Furman and significant developments in the lives of alumni. It will also carry feature articles about Furman people and programs. The magazine will explore a variety of subjects that lend themselves to fuller treatment. Through these two publications we hope to impart to you the vitality of Furman as it is today and to remind you occasionally of how it was when you were here.

We invite your comments and suggestions. We would like to know your concerns and subjects of special interest to you. From now on, we will publish letters from our readers on this page or in the front of the magazine.

M.H.



New perspectives
for the visual arts at Furman